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From Military Regime to Police State

The Suharto regime has now existed for thirty years. It started as a military regime in 1965 and gradually became a more personalised Suharto regime. A lot of changes occurred in these three decades, especially the relationship between Bina Graha (the Palace) and Cilangkap (Armed Forces Headquarters). It is more appropriate to characterise the changes in the Suharto regime as a shift from a military state to a police state.

A military dictatorship is characterised by the dominant role the military play in society. The *Orde Baru* Government of Suharto was precisely reflecting the dominant role in the Indonesian society. In the aftermath of the red drive which killed many hundreds of thousands of innocent people, the Suharto administration reflected the dominance of the military. The military doctrine *dwi fungsi* was implemented in full force. The *dwi fungsi* (Dual Function), enshrined in the Indonesian Constitution, justifies the military role in civilian affairs. It means that the military have a dual function in society, besides their normal duties as military in Defence and Security Affairs they also have a second function as a guidance force in civilian affairs. In 1966 Army officers were excessively over-represented in all sections of the society, a large number of cabinet ministers were military, the military were allocated a sizable amount of seats (first 75 later 100 seats, 20% of the seats in Parliament), many military became appointed leaders in the provincial administration from governors, district-heads, subdistrict-heads down to village-heads to replace allegedly left-wing office holders who were either killed or imprisoned.

Military regime

By any definition, the *Orde Baru* regime in those early days could be called a military regime, a general in the executive position, the political decision-making process was virtually in the hands of the military and most of the key positions were held by active or retired officers. President Suharto surrounded himself with a core group of generals as advisors called *SPRI* creating the impression that the new regime was moving towards a *junta* concept. The first ten years of the *Orde Baru* were also the fat years for retired officers posted at the top of state companies. Ret'd Lt General Ibnu Sutowo became one of the richest men in Indonesia as Director of *Pertamina,* was the top of the pinnacle but hundreds of high officers enjoyed an easy life through collusion, corruption etc.

Although never documented in writing, several Indonesianists argue that Suharto made an arrangement with the *ABRI* (the armed forces) top that a rotation will take place in due time. By the mid seventies, nearing the general elections of 1977 it was expected among the army top that Suharto would step down to be replaced by General Surono, the first man in the army. This replacement never took place and many versions circulate what actually happen between Suharto and the *ABRI* top. An earlier conflict between generals close to Suharto and sections of *ABRI* already exploded in 1974. Later incidents in 1978 when a group tried to force Suharto down from the presidency created more tensions. In 1980 Suharto decided to strike back , gave stern warnings to disgruntled high officers and demanded loyalty. Often 1980 is used as the year when the military regime changed into a Suharto regime.

The relationship between Suharto and *ABRI* changed drastically and in 1982 General Benny Murdani, somebody who has been out from the *ABRI* mainstream for many years, was assigned to lead *ABRI* and at the same to implement a major reorganisation. The major idea behind the reorganisation of *ABRI* was to streamline the armed forces into a leaner and more professional body. At the same time the excessive amount of military in the state economy sector were pushed back. The rampant corruption among military and the large amount of army companies were also phased back and put under one trust company. The reorganisation has never really finished and the last major reshuffle in January/February 1995 indicates just another phase.

Back to basics

Although Suharto increasingly relied only persons who were seen as loyalists, he also had a chronic distrust against persons who became too influential. Some of his closest operators, General Ali Murtopo in the early seventies or General Benny Murdani in the eighties were sidestepped at the top of their power. But the major thrust of the reorganisation of *ABRI*, curbing its powers became more and more apparent. The latest *ABRI* Commanders-in-Chief General Try Sutrisno (appointed in 1988) and General Feisal Tandjung (appointed in 1993) were both known as staunch Suharto loyalists. It was General Feisal Tandjung who introduced the parole *'back to basics'*, a concept to decrease the role of *ABRI* in society and instead increase the military skills of the members of the armed forces. It is necessary to review the *dwi fungsi*, was the argument. The two components of this military doctrine, the *kamtibmas (keamanan dan ketertiban masyarakat)*, security and order in contrast with *sospol (sosial dan politik)*, the civilian role of the military. Suharto and the loyalist generals are determined to drive back the *sospol* role of the military and as it has become clear in 1994 increase the *kamtibmas* component of *dwifungsi.*

Police State

In political dictionaries a police state is described as a state in which political stability has come to be, or seem to be, dependent upon police supervision of the ordinary citizen, and in which the police are given powers suitable to that. These powers can be used to detain for interrogation without charge, to search, to keep detailed records on citizens and to enforce measures designed to extinguish all opposition to the government and its institutions. The powers here may not be legally granted, but that is not normally an obstacle, since there is a presumption that there is no rule of law. It should be noted that above definition can be applied easily on the entire period of the *Orde Baru*, with a few explanations. One important aspect is that the Indonesian Police Force is an integral part of the armed forces and the security and order tasks by the Police are implemented by the entire *ABRI*, with the army as the most important component. With the decline of the civilian role of the military the security and order tasks of the military has become dominant and more felt in society. High officers who didn't agree with the strong focus on 'policing' while the role of military in society was being eroded, were removed, replaced or pensioned. The case of General Wismoyo is the latest and best example.

The downfall of General Wismoyo

General Wismoyo had all the necessary qualifications to become *ABRI*'s Number One. In the seventies he served as Suharto's adjudant during which time, he became close to the First Family. Relations became even more intimate when he married the younger sister of Madam Tien Suharto. These two connections became the gateway for a brilliant career in the army. Although he never shone while he was a cadet, his career rocketed and within ten years, Wismoyo had reached the top echelons of the army.

But there was a major flaw in his life-style: he is a notorious womaniser which sister-in-law Madam Tien, who upholds strict Victorian values about marriage, took seriously. Although he was destined to become *Pangab* (Commander-in-Chief) of *ABRI*, Wismoyo's many liaisons became his downfall. Already in January this year, it was apparent that Wismoyo would be ditched and sent into retirement. He was offered either a post as ambassador or chairman of the Indonesian Olympic Committee, as a face-saving device. The obstinate general rejected the ambassadorship and will now join the ranks of the growing number of disgruntled retired generals.

The downfall of Wismoyo has been expected for months and it came as no surprise to the general public.

Growing conflict

The Wismoyo case is a prime example of the strained relations between Suharto and the top echelons of *ABRI*. Political analysts in Jakarta now speak about *ABRI Cendana* or *ABRI loyalis* for officers close to Suharto and *ABRI Merah Putih* (the Indonesian flag) or *ABRI Sapta Marga* (the military oath) for the majority of officers who do not see loyalty to the armed forces as being synonymous with loyalty to

Suharto. Those in the latter group, mostly groomed in the eighties, the period when General Benny Murdani was commander-in-chief, are now drifting away from the president.

The political views of *ABRI* officers up to 1965 covered a wide spectrum, reflecting the many political parties and ideologies they supported or espoused. After the Suharto takeover, a wide-ranging shake-up took place, creating a smooth working relationship between Suharto and the generals as the core of the *Orde Baru*. Though rifts appeared in the early seventies, Suharto managed to maintain a steady alliance with most of the officers. Only after 1980, when Suharto began to impose a strongly personalised style of government, did important sections of *ABRI* start to display open discord. As Indonesian civil society is now beginning to show signs of a return to the pluralistic political society of the fifties, the military have begun to express the same tendencies.

Suharto's style of riding in tandem with *ABRI* is now a thing of the past and different set of criteria now apply for an officer to rise to the top. In theory *ABRI* has its own mechanism for determining suitability for an officer's selection for a post but Suharto has the final say as *Panglima Tertinggi* (Supreme Commander). At the end of the day, it is Suharto who, after getting advice from *Cilangkap*, will make the decision.

Adjutants, loyalty above all

During the era when General Benny Murdani was *ABRI* Commander-in-Chief, top-ranking military officers had similar qualifications: they had had a stint of combat in East Timor, had completed a course at *SESKOAD* (the Command and General Staff College) and, preferably, originated from intelligence ranks and/or *KOPASSUS*, the elite red-beret commando troops. The Benny era is now over and the three major waves of personnel changes, from January 1994 up to February 1995, have been characterised by a phasing out of all Murdani elements, *de-Benny-isasi*, as it is commonly called. It is estimated that fifty per cent of army officers are considered to be Benny loyalists and regarded by the Suharto group as potential dissenters. Suharto has now dispensed with all the Benny criteria and put in its place one simple criterion: undying loyalty to Suharto. Arbi Sanit, a lecturer at the University of Indonesia, put it like this:

"The main reason is the centralised system of power. The New Order rule is increasingly centralised. The selection of the elite will be more closely scrutinised. Within the military itself we see criticism. From inside we notice the power of the executive growing while criticism from outside is also mounting. This makes recruitment by the ruler more selective. Those who are close to the president are close to power. The trusted and loyal ones are the adjutants. [*Sinar*, 11 Febr. 1995]

In the last few weeks this criterion has been used to excess: Major-General Wiranto was appointed Jakarta military commander; Ret'd Field Marshall Soepandi became the director of Garuda, the national airlines; Brig.General Dibyo Widodo became the Jakarta Chief of Police. Lt. General Soejono became the Chief of Staff of the General Staff. All four had served stints as adjutants to Suharto. Previous adjutants who managed to get to the top are Ret'd General Try Sutrisno (Vice-President of the Republic), ret'd Police General Kunarto (former National Police Chief), ret'd Marshall Siboen (former Air Force Chief-of-Staff), Admirals Muhammad Arifin and Tanto Koeswanto (former and present Navy Chiefs-of-Staff), ret'd Major General Kentot Harseno (former Jakarta Military Commander) and Lt. General Soeryadi (former Army Vice-Chief of Staff).

Major reshuffle

Loyalty to Suharto was definitely the main theme behind the January reshuffle. Wismoyo's retirement came about not only because of his extra-marital affairs but first and foremost because of his personal views. It is said that on one occasion he told a group of colonels: *"If it is the people's wish that Suharto should be replaced, I will follow their wish"*. Another popular Wismoyo anecdote is the story of the wrist-watch. On one occasion, Wismoyo told a group of officers with some passion what loyalty means in military terms. *"If you are told by your superior to wear your watch on the right hand, then that is what you will do"*. Since then, many *ABRI* officers have worn their wrist-watches on their right hand as a sign of support for *ABRI Merah Putih* or even of being anti-Suharto. Wismoyo's removal had been expected for months; recently his followers have been busy preparing a manuscript of his memoirs. The book will be in the book shops in March.

The recent wide-ranging reshuffle wrought profound changes. Graduates from the 1965 and 1966 classes of the National Military Academy (AMN) have been moved into key positions. In particular the

class of '65 has now assumed a central role in the army. Eight out of the ten territorial military commanders are from the *AMN* Class of '65. The new deputy for social and political affairs, which is a key post, will be Major-General Mochammad Ma'ruf of the '65 class. Some key figures like Vice Chief of Staff Lt.General Soeryadi (*AMN* '64) and Chief of the General Staff Lt.General Mantiri (*AMN* '62) have been offered ambassadorial posts.

The formal procedure for *ABRI* promotions is in the hands of a team called *Wanjakti.* Usually the team's choice proceeds without difficulty but for key positions President Suharto sometimes decides otherwise. The promotion or downfall of key officers is still the prerogative of the old man.

Deep divisions

Suharto's meddling in the appointment of key persons at *Cilangkap* has created deep divisions among the generals. General Feisal Tandjung, the *ABRI* Commander-in-Chief is a staunch Suharto loyalist who has recently had frequent conflicts with Army Chief-of-Staff General Wismoyo. With the ousting of Wismoyo and the appointment of General Hartono as Chief-of-Staff, Suharto has managed to place two loyalists at the top of the *ABRI* hierarchy. Feisal Tandjung and Hartono are expected to cleanse *Cilangkap* from Benny Murdani 'contamination', the expression used by palace circles.

Indonesian analysts often describe Murdani as Suharto's nemesis. Bred and groomed for many years by Suharto, Murdani became too influential and had to be discarded. He was pensioned off, a trick also towards many of his men. The liquidation of *BAIS (Badan Intelijen Strategis,* Armed Forces Strategic Intelligence Agency) in 1994 was a heavy blow for the Murdani group. *BAIS* was Murdani's last institutional stronghold. In further reshuffles, intelligence officers close to Murdani were sidestepped. *BIA,* the replacement of *BAIS* is a much sanitised version and is no longer directly under the *ABRI* Commander. The 'civilian' Murdani rarely appears on the front pages these days but he still exerts influence among the more senior officers. Although seemingly powerless, Murdani together with an increasing number of disgruntled officers could emerge if a political crisis were to occur.

General Hartono, the back-seater

General Hartono, the new army chief-of-staff and previously the chief of staff for social and political affairs (*Kassospol*) has already proven his credentials. Earlier *Kassospols* were staunch *ABRI Merah Putih* advocates and created many problems for Suharto's domestic policies. Hartono is quite different. He openly advocates the position of '*ABRI* taking a back-seat' and is openly sympathetic with *ICMI*, the Muslim Intellects' Association, chaired by Minister for Research and Technology Rudy Habibie, a close Suharto trustie.

The question of whether *ABRI* takes a leading or back-seat position has been one of the major discussions in Indonesian politics. Hartono is from *AMN* Class of '62 and originates from the cavalry which has rarely produced officers at the top of the army. He is regarded as a brainy type. In 1976 he graduated from the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, US. In 1982 he graduated from the Indonesian Staff and Command School (*SESKOGAB)* and in 1988 he completed a course at *Lemhanas,* the Institute for National Defence. In the last few years he has been promoted several times. From 1990 to 1993 he was military commander in East Java before being appointed commander of *SESKOGAB. After* only a few months at the job, he was appointed governor of *Lemhanas*, another promotion, but that job didn't last long either. Early in 1994 he became *Kassospol,* the Chief of Staff for Political and Social Affairs, arguably the most influential job after the army chief-of-staff. The *Kassospol* is responsible for determining the role of the military in society and coordinates the appointment of all military officers in civilian functions, from cabinet ministers to village heads.

The majority of *ABRI* officers take it for granted that the armed forces has a vanguard role in society; they have been doing so for more than thirty years. People like General Hartono accept a less prominent role for *ABRI* in society for a series of reasons. One is a re-interpretation of the military doctrine *Dwi Fungsi* (dual function) which justifies military intervention in civilian matters. Back-seaters like Hartono argue that in order to improve the quality of the armed forces (its security and order functions), it should reduce its involvement in civilian matters (social and political affairs). Retired General Suharto, in the early days of his rule a staunch *Dwi Fungsi* proponent, has for obvious reasons moved to the '*ABRI* back-seat position' and has appointed 'back-seaters' in prominent positions.

Taking back-seat position does not mean that Hartono and others will accept a 'back to barracks' position. Their reasoning is primarily a political one: the all-out implementation of the *Dwi Fungsi* from the mid sixties had everything to do with the need for a reckoning with the PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party. The situation is under better control now, justifying a switch from front-seat to back-

seat. Nevertheless it should be clear that taking a back-seat does not mean that the military will allow civil society to determine its own course: military involvement in society will remain a permanent factor.

The new *Kassospol* Lt.General Mochammad Ma'ruf has followed in the footsteps of General Hartono and soon identified himself as a staunch back-seater. In his maiden speech Lt.General Mochammad Ma'ruf commented that *ABRI* takes a back seat when it comes to politics and allowing civilians to take the initiative. To back this up, he quoted an ancient Javanese saying: *tut wuri handayani*, which means supervising from behind. He warned however that *ABRI* could change its position overnight and moved back to the front-seat *(ing ngarso sung tulodo)* or middle position *(ing madyo mangun karso)*. The active or more laid-back military position in civilian affairs is often called 'the Turkish model' which covers a wide range of possibilities, from scrutinising a civilian government from the barracks to becoming a brutal military dictatorship.

Hartono in full flow

During his one-year stint as *Kassospol* (Chief of Social and Political Affairs), General Hartono was never idle. Army meddling in major issues is hardly a sign of taking a back seat. 1994 was a particularly bad year for human rights in Indonesia: the crackdown and trial of labour activists, the clamp-down on the press and the actions against the Muslim organisation *Nahdlatul Ulama* and the nationalist party, the *PDI*, are just the tip of the iceberg.

The ruthless harassments of NU's Abdurrachman Wahid and Megawati of the PDI are typical of the operations originating from the *Kassospol* office. Abdurrachman Wahid, or Gus Dur as he is popularly called, and Megawati lead movements which represent millions of people and are seen by *Bina Graha*, the palace clique, as a grave threat. Gus Dur, recently re-elected as chairman of *Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)*, the biggest Muslim organisation (with 25 to 30 million adherents, arguably the biggest organisation in the world), is one obvious danger while Megawati, the daughter of Sukarno, Indonesia's first president as chair of *PDI*, a federation of nationalist and Christian parties, could emerge as a viable alternative to rule by Suharto. Ever since their elections, Gus Dur and Megawati have had to endure all manner of slurs and have had to fence off numerous attacks. While attacks on Gus Dur have been highly personalised, emphasising his close connections with Benny Murdani and secular groups (including activist NGOs), the attacks on Megawati have accused the *PDI of* harbouring communists.

The spectre of *NU* and *PDI* joining ranks against the regime is creating nightmares for the Suharto clique. Although so far, attempts to unseat Gus Dur and Megawati have been unsuccessful, Hartono's efforts were rewarded by Suharto with his quick promotion as chief of staff. In other words, back-seatism is merely a question of loyalty.

Indonesian society has become infinitely more complex than in the early days of Suharto's rule. A burgeoning working class, the emergence of a plural middle class and nation-wide social protests from the young generation are making it more difficult for Suharto to rule along the old lines. Stories about his deteriorating health are persistent and he has made no moves yet to appoint a successor. Even his most loyal supporters are getting worried about the lack of safe scenarios. All the signs are that Suharto cannot take the risk of stepping down which means that he will opt for a seventh term in 1998. The prospect of Suharto clinging on, will diminish the prospects of peaceful change. It will only exacerbate the antagonisms. Some anti-Suharto factions, not least those in the military, may see no other way than to force him out.

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